

You may have seen adverts
on television about instant
cures for sensitive teeth.

Sensitivity is a common
problem, affecting 1 in 3
people. Here we help you
to identify the causes and
help you stop it. We have
solutions!

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Family Dental Care

**How to look
after sensitive
teeth**

What is sensitivity?

Tooth sensitivity (or dentine hypersensitivity) often appears as a painful short, sharp reaction to hot, cold, acidic or sweet food or drink. Ice cream or cold weather may set this off, as may toothbrushing.

1 in 3 people are likely to have this at some time. It happens most in 20 - 40 age group.

This can be caused by:

- wearing away of the tooth surface by over enthusiastic toothbrushing or by grinding the teeth.
- receding gums from gum disease or incorrect toothbrushing

To prevent this problem getting worse you can:

- clean your teeth carefully twice a day making sure you are doing it as shown by your dentist or hygienist.
- use a sensitive toothpaste recommended by your dentist such as Sensodyne or Colgate sensitive toothpastes. Apply as a cream at night to the sensitive tooth or teeth. Many of these now have an instant effect.
- watch what you eat and drink. Keep the frequency of acidic food and drinks or fizzy drinks to a minimum especially until the teeth settle down.

Your dentist or hygienist can help:

- apply fluoride varnish or a sealer to the exposed sensitive dentine to help desensitise them
- correct bite problems to reduce the wear of tooth enamel
- place filling material to cover the exposed root surfaces
- suggest wear of a night time splint to reduce pressure from clenching or grinding your teeth